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C O N F I D E N T I A L WARSAW 001522

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/17/2015

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PL](#)

SUBJECT: POLISH PM BELKA AND HIS PARTY AT ODDS

REF: A. WARSAW 1358

[1](#)B. WARSAW 1126

Classified By: CDA Cameron Munter. Reasons: 1.5 (B) and (D).

[1](#)1. (U) A March 16 meeting between PM Marek Belka and the leadership of the governing Democratic Left Alliance (SLD), ended with disagreement over Belka's plan to resign this spring and the leadership's announced desire for fall elections. Belka stuck to his position that he will resign on May 5, when the Polish lower house is set to vote on a motion to dissolve the parliament; he wants elections to take place in June.

[1](#)2. (U) SLD leaders had previously stated at a March 12 meeting that elections should take place at the end of September, and that they would not support the May 5 resolution, meaning that it will fail. SLD party chairman Jozef Oleksy and his rival Krzysztof Janik (who until recently supported elections in June), argued that Belka should wait to resign until after the Council of Europe summit on May 16 in Warsaw so as not to embarrass Poland, but Belka refused to budge. Following the meeting, SLD Deputy Chairperson MP Katarzyna Piekarska told the press that the relationship between the SLD and Belka's government amounts to "a marriage in separation."

[1](#)3. (SBU) Belka and the SLD leadership reportedly also clashed over a replacement for Deputy PM Jerzy Hausner, who submitted his resignation on March 8 (Ref A). Belka has yet to act on this matter. Belka's likely decision to join the fledgling Democratic Party (PD) (Ref B), also drew flack from the SLD leadership.

[1](#)4. (SBU) Although Belka seems determined to resign on May 5, President Kwasniewski has indicated that he will not accept Belka's resignation. It would appear that Belka would then be forced to continue to serve. (NOTE: it is not clear what would happen if Belka, in response, refused to work, or as one commentator remarked, "went on an extended vacation to the Spanish beaches." However, given Belka's ties to Kwasniewski and sense of responsibility, this variant is unlikely. END NOTE). A member of the opposition Law and Justice (PiS) party told us he expects fall elections unless there is some immediate collapse of the SLD.

[1](#)5. (C) COMMENT. The public airing of the conflict between Belka and the SLD leadership is an indication of just how fractured the once unified SLD has become. It has followed in the footsteps of its predecessor in power, the once mighty Solidarity Electoral Action (AWS), which four years ago underwent a similar process of self-immolation. The only issue on which the SLD now seems unified is the September election date.

Munter

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